

## House Republican Press Release

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### Legislature's Temper Tantrum Will Cost You Dearly



*By State Rep. Kevin M. DelGobbo, R-70th,  
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The Democrat controlled legislature is having what amounts to a temper tantrum. With its realization that you, the people of Connecticut, have told them they cannot spend any more, our General Assembly is acting like a spoiled child at the check-out line of a grocery store, screaming for that sugar pop.

Colorful analogies aside, Connecticut is on the threshold of a constitutional crisis. In the name of maximizing federal revenue, our legislature seems hell bent on throwing aside the results of a statewide referendum that set some limits on the state's ability to squander your tax dollars.

Voters in 1992 approved the constitutional spending cap by an overwhelming 80 percent margin. In the same year that a state income tax was imposed on us, the "cap" aimed to put some limit on the blank check that the legislature views as the taxpayers' pocket.

This spending cap also was supposed to provide at least a speed bump against the legislature's driving us toward bankruptcy.

Right now, the legislature is considering a proposal to ignore the constitutional spending cap by a simple legislative vote. This is a testament to the General Assembly's willful disregard of the voters of this state. The referendum we all supported in 1992 directed that the spending cap be included in our state constitution for all time, not some law that the legislature could repeal at its whim.

Since 1992, successive General Assemblies have purposefully ignored and thwarted the people's will by its failure to implement the spending cap as a constitutional provision.

Having already doubled the state budget since 1992 and spent us to the edge of the proverbial cliff, our legislature wants the ability to spend more.

Hoping that a few facts won't get in the way, I would point out that the spending cap does not prevent Connecticut from maximizing federal revenue. It does demand however that we prioritize our spending in order to live within our means. The current spending

cap even provides for special circumstances that would allow for spending above the cap-provided the governor and the legislature act in concert and the legislature votes by a three-fifths majority vote to do so.

The legislature needs to make hard choices. It needs to set priorities. It needs to focus on doing fewer things well, instead of trying to be all things to all people-always at taxpayers' expense.

The basic truth is this: disregarding the constitutional spending cap inevitably will mean higher taxes on already overburdened Connecticut families and small businesses. It will mean more jobs leaving our state. It will perpetuate an unsustainable budget framework that hurts every citizen. This is what voters feared in 1992. Not only would we face a personal income tax, but other higher taxes as well.

It will also mean that YOUR will is meaningless to our state government.

Many of my colleagues are hoping that the arcane issue of a constitutional provision will not be of interest to the hearts and minds of Connecticut residents. They believe that any means (ignoring a directive from voters) justifies the end of gaining a few extra dollars for them to spend.

Tell them they can't have that sugar pop.

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